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THE WEDDING FEAST,

A TRAGIC DRAMA IN THREE ACTS,

WITH A PROLOGUE,

HALLOWE'EN.

BY

WILLIAM AUGUSTINE LEAHY.

The Scene is laid in Clifton, a town of Kent. The period is that of Wat Tyler's Rebellion.

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BOSTON.

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PROLOGUE.

HALLOWE'EN.

CHARACTERS:

JOCK O' DEAN, a young yeoman.
MADAM DEAN, his mother.
KITTY DEAN, his sister.
WINNIE DARLING, his cousin.
"EDGAR L'ESTRANGE."
VILLAGERS.

Scene: Dean Cottage. Doors at R 3 E, L 2 E, and L in flat. A round window with wooden cover at R in flat. Hearth-fire at R with crane. Tables heaped with nuts and apples. Benches. A tub of water. Apples hung from ceiling. Flitches of bacon and hams. Evergreen festoons. Candles lit.

Madam Dean discovered heaping wood on fire. Enter Kitty, L 2 E, with a lapful of nuts.

Kitty. There you are. Plenty for all. The filberts are good this year. (*Nibbles one. Enter Jock o' Dean*, R 3 E, *muffled up, high boots, shovel in hand*)

Jock. I must shovel a way in for the neighbors, mother. The snow's drifted over the path three feet deep, and still coming down like an old ewe's fleece in the shearing trough. What are half the benches set over there for, Kitty?

Kitty. This side is for the lads and the other for the lasses.

Jock. Ha! ha! Do you think you can keep them apart? Not on Hallowe'en. Why; this is sweethearts' own night.—Come; come; fill the tub brimful. Don't be stingy—at least with water. How could Ned duck his red shock under that film? A minnow-pool! Brim it up, lassie!

Kitty. Ned Baker's hair is not red, Jock o' Dean. It's as brown as your own, and you know it. (*Jock kisses her*)

Madam. Fetch the cider, Kitty; we've little time.

Kitty Where's Winnie?

Madam. Upstairs.

Kitty. Tell her to watch my nuts, especially when Merry Andrew's 'round.

Madam. She watch? The shy wean, she couldn't frighten a squirrel.

Jock. But she's the flower of us all, mother. Mother, you have seen Winnie and me grow up together.

Mother. Aye; under this roof.

Jock. We have lived like brother and sister. Maybe you'ld like—maybe you'ld like—

Madam. I'm not saying no,—If I understand you, son.

Kitty. (*Singing*) She's o'eryoung to marry yet.

Jock. Sixteen.

Madam. And but three years between you.

Jock. I cannot hold back longer. The love leaps to my lips when I see her. I must ask her to-night.

Kitty. And what will she say, think you?

Jock I have her good will, I believe.

Kitty. Don't be too sure.

Jock. The ribbon she gave me.

Kitty. Winnie's learning women's ways.

Jock. And the blushes I stir in her cheeks.

Kitty. I saw redder ones yestermorn when Edgar, the troubadour, greeted us.

Jock. Who?

Madam. A roving nobody that's passed through the village lately. Quit your teasing, Kitty.

Kitty Oh! only brothers may tease, I see.

Madam. I have long looked for it, Jock. May God speed you to her heart. (*Exit* R 3 E)

Kitty. And me to the cider-shelf. (*Exit* L 2 E)

Jock. And me to the snow-drift. (*Enter Winnie* R 3 E)

Winnie. Jock!

Jock. (*At* D F) Winnie! A new gown? How dainty!

Winnie. Nay; my old best one, but trimmed a bit here.

Jock. For the party to-night?

Winnie. For—the party to-night.

Jock. Oh! you should be robed in silks, Winnie. (*She starts*) The bit of red becomes you like his new gorget the robin in spring. But the wrappings? You are not going out? It's cutting cold. Oh! to the milk-shed; yes. Good-bye, then.

Winnie (*Apart*) He thinks I called him back to look at my gown.

Jock. We shall have something to say to each other to-night, Winnie. (*Exit* D F)

Winnie. Oh! I *can't* tell them. What if Jock should—(*Sleigh bells*) Hark! Bells! He's coming. (*Re-enter Madam* R 3 E)

Madam. (*With dishes, singing softly*) And wasn't that a dainty dish to set before a king.

Watch the wheat-cakes for me, Winnie dear, and turn them when they're brown. What! a new trimming on your gown. This is what has kept you upstairs so much of late. So pretty! (*Kisses her*) Tut! the cakes are burning. (*Goes to hearth. Enter Edgar L'Estrange at* D F)

Edgar. Winifred.

Winnie. My Lord. (*Re-enter Kitty with cider-jars* L 2 E)

Kitty. Welcome, Edgar L'Estrange.

Madam, (*Turning*) So this is Edgar L'Estrange.

Edgar. I am known, I perceive.

Kitty. Yes; indeed. Take a handful of nuts and as many apples as you can bite your teeth into. (*Swings one toward him*)

Madam Ay; stay by our fireside, minstrel, and sing us a song to gladden the guests.

Kitty. Or recite a love-tale. It's Hallowe'en.

Edgar. A love-tale? Listen, ladies. (*Drawing Winnie to him*)

For this cheek

I have forsworn a vow.

Kit. Forsworn a vow
For Winnie's cheek?
Ed. I was a boy, just riping.
Love made his rounds about me and all felt
The sweet sting of his arrows. I alone,
Who measured maidens by my mother's memory,
Passed early youth heart-whole. But man must love.
Of love my soul begot a beauteous vision,
And her I long pursued. To her I paid
The first-fruits of my knighthood. In her name
My sword smote wonders. In my tent at night,
Or on the rapid march, or in my bark
On the moon-misted sea, I dreamt of her.
Against the soft seducings of my heart
Toward some veiled beauty of the Eastern marts,
Or olive, bronze-eyed girl of Italy,
I set her golden loveliness.
Kit. Was she
An angel, stranger?
Ed. Nay; a vision, such
As minstrels dream. But once there came a thought:
What if some day I saw my love on earth,
So fair, so sweet, so pure? Then should I woo her?
Ah me! the lost souls do not woo the angels.
Do lovers love the maidens whom they woo?
Methinks a man should set love's mark so high
That she who should be worthy of his love
Were far too holy that he should possess her.
Nay; I should worship her afar, nor stain
Her soul with touch of mine. That thought I framed
Into a vow, a young knight-errant's rash,
Heaven-scaling vow. But when I saw you, love,
And your untroubled eye shone deep and clear
Into my soul,—we loved each other. So
I was forsworn.
Win. It is no sin, my lord.
Mad. and Kit. My lord! (*Noise of Jock shovelling*)
Ed. So ends his last love-tale Edgar, the troubadour. To-night I throw off the sportive mask. (*Throws back cloak*) Know me now as baron Conrad Norman.
Mad. and Kit. The lord of the valley!
Ed. By God's grace,—having lately, as you may have heard, come into my uncle's title. Under the guise of a roving minstrel I have wooed and won your niece, Madam Dean. In my own name, I am here to claim her for my bride.
Mad. Bride!
Kit. The love-tale was true, then?
Ed. (*To Winnie*) Can it be envy that clouds them so?
Win. Nay, my lord; they meant me for—another.
Mad. (*Curtsying*) We wish you joy, baron Norman.
Kit. (*Curtsying*) And your ladyship. Will you not remain till the neighbors come?

Win. (*Quickly*) Oh! no, my lord.
Kit. (*Aside to Madam*) She has never told him of Jock.
Ed. It would please me to share in your hospitality. But my own awaits Winifred. The revels are already begun at the castle. (*Assists Winnie*)
Mad. And of course ours are humble to them.
Kit. As homespun to velvet, my lord.
Ed. Forgive me. I had thought to give you a glad surprise,—forgetting what a treasure I rob you of.
Kit. That which goes freely is not robbed.
Mad. And you proclaim your purposes honorable, my lord.
Ed. Before all the world. Honorable and larger than you dream. Every cottager in this valley will bless the day when a village girl became baron Norman's bride.
Kit. Shall we, my lord?
Mad. I trust we may.
Win. Farewell, Mother Dean! Farewell, Kitty! (*They curtsy coldly. She weeps*)
Ed. Come, Winifred! Come! Come! (*Exeunt* D F)
Mad. She that I took in an orphan without kith or kin, and reared like one of my own. (*Sleigh-bells. Jock whistles*)
Kit. This will kill Jock. (*Enter Jock, snowy, at* L 2 E)
Jock. Whew! There! I've shovelled all around. Who was that came?
Mad. None, as yet.
Jock. None yet? Then the witches are abroad. Didn't I hear sleighbells? You're plaguing me. It's Ned Baker; of course, he's the first. Eh, Kitty? Where's he hiding, the rascal?
Kit. It wasn't Ned.
Jock. Who was it, then? Where's Winnie? What are you both looking so dark for? (*Calls at* R 3 E) Winnie!
Mad. She's gone, Jock.
Jock. Gone? Oh! of course, to the milk-shed. She'll have tingling cheeks, the lassie, when she comes back. It's cutting cold for Hallowe'en. A log on for Winnie!
Kit. She's gone away.
Mad. Not to come back.
Kit. To live with the new baron.
Mad. He wooed her secretly as Edgar, the troubadour.
Kit. 'Twas his sleigh-bells you heard.
Mad. They are on their way now to the castle.
Jock. The castle!
Mad. No, no, not that, not so bad as that.
Kit. She went freely.
Mad. To be his bride.
Jock. Bride!—Are you jesting at me?—Mother!
Mad. I would it were some jest, that a word could end. In all soberness, she has gone to the castle to be baron Norman's bride.
Jock. Bride! In that nest of harlotry!—Snow here? (*Loudly*) Winnie!—My God, they have stolen her from me! Oh, slaves that we are! (*Enter neighbors* 2 L E, *Marion, Ned Baker, Merry Andrew, etc., romping*)

Jock. (*To* D F) Slaves!
Kit. Stop him!
Mad. Jock, you are mad. (*Exit Jock* D F)
Jock. (*Outside*) Slaves!
Kit. The wind howls like a wolf.
Mad. He will follow them and perish in the snow. (*Merry Andrew steals a handful of nuts*)

[CURTAIN.]

THE WEDDING FEAST.

TIME: seven months later.

SCENES.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Dean Cottage.
" II. The Witches' Den.
" III. Court-yard of the Castle.

ACT II.

CLIFTON GREEN: The Wedding Feast.

ACT III.

SCENE I. Willow Road.
" II. Friar Nod's Cell.
" III. The Witches' Den.
" IV. The Bridal Chamber.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JOCK O' DEAN, an Outlaw.
MERRY ANDREW, a Village Idler.
BARON CONRAD NORMAN.
SIR FRANK ROMAINES.
FRIAR NOD.
NED BAKER, Kitty Dean's Betrothed.
HUBERT, BERNARDO, } Guards.
CHARLES, the Parish Beadle.
TOM HARVEY, a Serf.
ALLAN FORSTER, Lieutenant of Wat Tyler.
MARVIN KEEP, Sheriff, and Warden of the Castle.
LADY WINIFRED NORMAN, Bride of the Baron.
KITTY DEAN.
MADAM DEAN.
MARION.
RAIMOND, a Page.
BLIND ROBIN.
KNIGHTS, LADIES, OUTLAWS, SERFS, VILLAGERS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Dean Cottage. Table and cupboard at L rear. Madam Dean discovered at R rear, pillowed in an arm-chair. Enter Kitty, R 3 E.

KITTY. (*Apart*) Poor mother! (*Aloud*) There's the ribbon, mother. See, his name in blue thread, the very stitch I taught her when we used to knit together in Mercy Fletcher's doorway.

MADAM DEAN. Is Robin come?

KITTY. Not yet. (*Goes to* D F *and glances out* L) Here's Friar Nod, trudging down the hill. Poor old man, his feet can hardly carry him the long journeys he must make. (*Lowing of a cow from* L. *Kitty takes milk-pail from table and comes down* L) Moo! Moo! Milk me! Milk me! Stop your lowing, Hetty Dean, you saucy old cow! (*Exit* L 2 E)

MADAM DEAN. (*Eyeing ribbon*) Will you know the gift, Winnie Darling? Will you remember the birthday a year ago when you flattered my poor boy's heart with this trinket from your own pretty fingers? Seven long months since Hallowe'en, when she went up to live in the castle! (*Marvin Keep's head at window*) That week Jock went off into the forest, an outlaw. Then all the slanderous tongues began to wag, and all the godly censors to judge my boy for the crime that was no crime. (*Re-enter Kitty* L 2 E, *with pail, milk spilled over her apron. Removes apron*)

KITTY. Well, Hetty's in a temper, too, this morning. That's twice she's kicked it over,—and as for her tail! (*Enter Keep* D F.)

MADAM DEAN. Never headsman's axe dealt juster blow than the fist that felled Marvin Keep!

KITTY. The wolf!

KEEP. (*Coming forward*) A certain name is on your lips, mesdames.

MADAM DEAN. (*Startled*) You darken my door again?

KEEP. *Your* door? (*Draws out a process*) What have you there? Some token from Kitty's spark, Ned Baker? (*Snatches at ribbon*)

KITTY. And if it were, you dare not so much as finger the edge of it! You're brave enough to come with your process and drive two *women* from their roof—

MADAM DEAN. Peace, Kitty. Is all to be taken, sheriff Keep?

KEEP. (*Flourishing writ*) All, says the process.

KITTY. And for what?

KEEP. Because a felon's goods are forfeit to the crown, sweetheart.

KITTY. Felon yourself!

MADAM DEAN. You provoked him to the blow.

KEEP. (*Reading*) "To the sheriff of Cliftonshire, greetings from Richard, his majesty. You are hereby commanded, on

the 16th day of June, in the year of our Lord, 1381,"—to-morrow, Madam Dean,—"to seize all lands and goods"—

MADAM DEAN. To-morrow?

KEEP. Did I not give you warning enough? Have I not made you a friendly offer? To-morrow at sunrise my constables will be here,—unless,—need I speak plainly, Kitty?

MADAM DEAN. You *think* plainly. (*Enter Jock with a brace of fowl, and Ned*, D F)

KEEP. You don't answer. I can stay the process. I can fit your sweet body with many a fair gown, ay, (*Whispering*) and lift the ban of outlawry from him that robs in the forest.

KITTY. And your price for these favors? (*Keep tries to kiss her. She slaps his face*)

KEEP. Hussy! You're too proud for your station. (*Seizes her. Kitty shrieks. Jock lays fowl on table and flings Keep aside, laughing in mockery of his discomfiture*)

MADAM DEAN AND KITTY. Jock! (*Madam Dean hides the ribbon*)

JOCK. Pretty play, grave officer! (*Fiercely*) Draw!

KEEP. I am an old man and stiff, Jock o' Dean.

JOCK. Four-score winters had whitened Jonas Whittaker's hairs. Who shot him dead in the park?

KEEP. He was snaring a pheasant,—breaking the laws I serve.

JOCK. Revenge! Lust! Avarice! These are the laws you serve. By heaven! I think they are monarchs of England.

NED. (*at* D F) Hist! (*Starts to shut the door, but seeing the newcomer is friar Nod, salutes him. Jock advances on Keep*)

KITTY. Peace, Jock, in the house.

MADAM DEAN. In the name of prudence—

FRIAR NOD. In the name of God! (*Silence. Ned crosses to Kitty at* R *rear. Business between them.*)

FRIAR NOD. What brings you two here?

KEEP. (*Flourishing writ*) The laws of England!

FR. No private purpose?

KEEP. Dare you hinder the king's officer?

FR. I dare hinder the king, were his errand foul as yours.

KEEP. (*Edging toward* D F) Cowled foreign beggars! Meddlers in honest Englishmen's work!

JOCK. Go!

KEEP. We'll pitch you out of our island.

NED. (*At* R *rear*) How the beaten cock crows!

KITTY. He'll strike friar Nod.

KEEP. Insolent beadmongers!

JOCK. (*Suddenly*) Wince! (*Exit Keep, hastily,* D F, *and passes window*) Blusterer! (*Laughs*)

FR. It is such as he that on their death-beds of sin cry loudest for the insolent beadmonger!

MAD. God grant he may not cry in vain!

JOCK. The old homestead! And the Norman's hatred pursues me so far? He would add even this poor plunder to his spoils. (*Embracing them*) Mother! Kitty!

MAD. My boy! How changed!

JOCK. Ill? No wonder! Poor mother! Would they drive you forth on the roadside to starve?

MAD. To die.

FR. What game is afoot, Jock, that you visit poor Clifton?

MAD. (*Aside*) That he should return on just this day!

KITTY. (*Aside*) Their wedding day, too.

FR. To plunder the market, maybe?

JOCK. (*Recklessly*) Tell me, father, on your conscience, is Robin Hood damned?

FR. Damned? How should I say? Who can measure the limits of God's mercy?

JOCK. Then there's some hope for Jock o' Dean. (*Crosses to table and picks up fowl*) A quarter-staff in his right hand and an alms-gift in his left, which will weigh the heavier in God's scales, I wonder? Have no fear to lose the cottage, mother. (*Fiercely*) Those are my acres,—mine and yours, —By heaven, they shall not be taken from us! Out of your sparking corner, Ned! (*Goes up* L. *Ned crosses* R to L.)

KIT. Whither away so early?

JOCK. To the mending of wrongs.

MAD. Not after the sheriff?

KIT. The garden path. (*Points to* L 2 E)

JOCK. Twice Keep's shadow has crossed me. The third time—

FR. Well?

JOCK. (*At* L 2 E) Before to-morrow's sun dawns a tyrant will be dragged from the throne of England, and the will of the people be sovereign as of old!

KITTY. (*At* C, *aside to Ned*) So soon.

MAD. What does he mean?

FR. Bubbles all! Bubbles all!

NED. Nay, the clergy are with us.

JOCK. (*Kissing Kitty at* L 2 E) Then let lesser tyrants look to their safety. (*Ned tries to kiss Kitty*)

FR. Tut, tut!

JOCK. Good-bye! (*Exit* L 2 E *with Ned*)

FR. Wayward, tempestuous soul!

KITTY. Don't cry, mother! It seems to me that's Hetty lowing again. (*Ned reappears at* L 2 E *and kisses her*) No, it wasn't Hetty.

FR. How soon would they evict you, Madam Dean?

MAD. To-morrow.

FR. (*Whispering*) Trust in God. You shall be provided for. I have in my eye a cottage every whit as tidy as this.

MAD. I am not one that love to lean on my neighbors, father.

FR. Tut, tut! You shall live there, the church's tenant, and pay rent to none but the Lord.

MAD. Can I forget the old, sweet days, when I stood at yonder door, watching my boy as he came through the paths, his labor done,—

KIT. Whistling like a thrush.

FR. Well may you grieve, Madame Dean. A good son Jock was to you then.

KIT. And who made him what he is?

MAD. To-day she that drove him to his ruin is wedded to her lord, and we on the roadside starving. (*She takes out the ribbon*)

FR. Drove him to his ruin? There was no troth between Winnie Darling and your Jock.

KIT. As good as a troth, and an honest girl would keep it and not drive a lad that loved her to shame,—her own blood-cousin, too. (*Takes the ribbon and shows it to friar*)

MAD. Peace, Kitty, we have done grieving for a low-born hussy's fickleness. (*Enter Merry Andrew* D F)

M. A. (*Apart*) He's gone!

FR. Fickle is a hard word, Madam Dean.

MAD. Was she worthier than my son? What lad of the village had broader fields than his, all earned by his own honest toil?

M. A. (*Beside the table, apart*) But he left his quarry

KIT. There's not a lord in England a better man than my Jock, on foot and with equal arms.

FR. Yes, all that—

KIT. All that, and spurned by a baby doll, in love with her own pretty face and the gowns and jewels his *Baronship* can give her to set it off. (*Friar stares*)

MAD. Be respectful, Kitty, to the holy friar.

FR. And would she be the first lass so bewitched at sixteen? (*Returns ribbon*) Nay, nay; they loved each other from the hour they met when first young baron Conrad came to take his uncle's name and castle. (*To Madam*) Jock was all that, Madam Dean,—frolicsome, generous, open-handed ever. If he had a fault, it was pride.

MAD. (*Softly*) If he has a fault, it is love.

FR. You yourself are a gentlewoman. Your son is but half a peasant,—and your half-peasant is a mortal Lucifer. (*Merry Andrew meets him quickly*)

M. A. Would your reverence do me a kindness?

FR. Bless me!

MAD. Merry Andrew?

KIT. In the garb of a fool?

M. A. Yes,—That is, of a jester. (*To Madam, maliciously*) A paper the sheriff bade me leave. (*To Friar*) A suit of motley, that Reynard, the jester of the late baron Norman, gave me as a token of his friendship, when he left. Your reverence knows I have some talent as a jester.

MAD. The process! (*Kitty tears it to shreds*)

FR. Yes, they call you Merry Andrew.

KIT. Merry Andrew? Villain Andrew! *I* never saw a true smile on his phiz.

M. A. Reynard, the old baron's jester, often took notice of me before he left the new baron's service and went over to the Duke of Chichester.

KIT. God help the Duke of Chichester!

M. A. The new baron has no jester. It stands likely he will want one—to caper for his guests,—so! (*He Illustrates*)

FR. Ha! ha!

M. A. To tease his lady's waiting-maids—so! (*Illustrates.*)
Fr. Ha! ha! ha!
M. A. And to poke fun at fat abbot Giles!
Fr. What!
M. A. I mean to-to-poke fun at good abbot Giles's d-d-detractors!
Kit. How long since you've stuttered, I'ld like to know?
M. A. It's a warm berth, that of jester, and your reverence knows I am not rich. Heaven's holy will be done! (*Crosses himself*) Many a purse and costly gewgaw, and dagger all studded with stones, Reynard has showed me, that he got from lords and ladies when he pleased them. He was served by pages, came and went as he liked, and none dared say boo to him in all the castle for fear of the old black baron.
Fr. And so you think *you* could order about the pages of the castle,—youths of gentle birth?
Kit. And he the son of a swineherd.
M. A. The new baron thinks highly of your reverence.
Fr. Tut, tut! He barely knows me.
M. A. Oh, your reverence! 'Tis common report.
Fr. Tut, tut!
M. A. And should your reverence recommend my name to him strongly,—and then should my lady Winifred whisper it in his ear,—and I'll give them a foretaste of my drolleries on the green this afternoon,—why, if all prospers, I may fill Reynard's place at the castle so.
Fr. (*Sternly*) You know why Reynard was dismissed, I suppose.
M. A. Was he *dismissed*, your reverence?
Fr. For some scurvy trick on the reverend abbot.
M. A. Oh!
Kit. (*Mocking*) Oh!
Fr. Would you use your privileges there to make light of holy men and holy things?
M. A. Me, your reverence? Me? Oh, if you knew how faithfully I keep the feasts of the church.
Fr. Indeed, I never remarked it.
M. A. On Saint Andrew's day
I recite long rituals
And abstain from vic-tu-als,
And every morn when I rise, for a starter,
I cross myself twice and then patter a Pater.
Kit. (*Aside*) You thieving hypocrite, ribald rogue!
M. A. And 'tis no sin to be ambitious, your reverence.
Mad. Calls he *that* ambition!
Fr. Well, well, you have a merry face now that I look at you closely. I'll speak to the Baron for you.
M. A. A hundred thousand thanks, and your blessing, good father. (*Kneels*)
Fr. Bless you.
Kit. (*Aside*) You rogue!
Fr. You'ld make a good fool, I verily believe, ha! ha!
M. A. Ha! ha! ha! Your reverence is keen at a jest.
Fr. Away with you now. I'll speak to him.

KIT. Don't cry, mother. "They *shall* not be taken," said Jock, and he has never broken his word to us yet.

MAD. Ay, Jock keeps his word.

KIT. Never fear. He knows a way, then. (*Apart*) But I wish I knew what the game is. (*Roundelay by girls at a distance*)

A gay betrothal, merry bridal,
Laughing bride and ladies.
Up came Tom, the rover idle,
"Tell me who the maid is?"
Tell me who the maid is,
Tell me who the maid is,
Up came Tom, the rover idle,
"Tell me who the maid is?"

FR. 'Tis the cottage in the west meadows that I purchased with last year's tithes.

M. A. (*At* L *rear*) If I get scent of Jock o' Dean, I am the Baron's jester!

FR. Hey? Yes, yes, the Baron's jester. Away with you! I'll speak to him. (*Villagers in holiday garb pass* D F, R *to* L)

VILLAGERS. Look at Merry Andrew, dressed in motley! (*M. A. tumbles out jingling his bells. A guffaw. Girls pass* R *to* L, *singing roundelay*)

Sweet Winnie Darling she was christened.
To her cottage shady
Came a lord with a ring that glistened,
Now she is my lady.
Now she is my lady;
Now she is my lady.
Sweet Winnie Darling she was christened,
Now she is my lady. (*Kitty slams door and shuts window*)

FR. There you shall house in comfort till Kitty and Ned Baker are cried in church some fine Sunday.

KIT. Ned Baker? La, Friar Nod! I'm only trying the lad.

FR. Tut, tut! I will make all ready and send further word by Ned to-night. (*Crosses to* L 2 E)

MAD. God rest you, father. Kitty, run and lift the latch. (*Apart*) A new nest for the old robin. Will they fit? Will they fit?

FR. (*At* L 2 E) Bless you, children. (*A knock at* D F)

MAD. What's that?—The sheriff again! I know his stealthy knock. (*Knock repeated*)

FR. Who's there? (*Knock repeated*)

KIT. Coming!—Sit quiet, mother.—Coming! (*Snatches a knife from cupboard and tucks it in girdle; then cautiously opens door in flat. Madam Dean has risen to an attitude of suspense*)

KIT. Why it's only blind Robin. (*Friar, at* L 2 E, *laughs. Blind Robin standing in sunlight*)

MAD. (*Sinking back, feebly*) At last!—The ribbon.

SCENE II.

The Witches' Den. Interior of a cavern. Set piece to be dropped from loft at second grooves. Covered entrance at C. Weak light from entrance at R. Serfs and rebels discovered, with Tom Harvey. A whistle is heard outside.

TOM. Hark! (*Whistle repeated. Tom answers. Enter* C D F *Jock o' Dean, Ned Baker and Allan Forster. Cheers.*)
TOM. Welcome back to Clifton, Jock o' Dean!
JOCK. Tom Harvey! (*Clasps hands of rebels*)
TOM. I barely knew you, boy.
JOCK. (*Laughing*) Am I changed?
What cheer lads, what cheer?
TOM. All's thriving, Jock.
The Wilton men are mustering thick as bees.
JOCK. Good, stalwart yeomen there. I'ld be myself
The herald to warn them of our game tonight,
But here's a practised leader, Allan Forster,
A soldier browned in thirty years of service.
He's riding through the loyal Kentish towns
With greetings from Wat Tyler.
REBELS. Read the greetings! The greetings from Wat Tyler!
FORST. (*Reading*) "To the men of Kent: The army of the people has taken London." (*Cheers*) Not so loud, I pray you. "To-day the king holds parley with me at Smithfield, and ere the sun downs tonight, or Wat Tyler will be slain or the three-groat tax will be repealed." (*Cheers*)
JOCK. The grossest charge that ever opulence laid on misery.
FORST. "Muster under your chosen leaders. Forge pikes of your ploughshares, and bullets of your chains. No bloodshed till the word be given; but march to meet me in London with all speed. Yours in the good cause. Wat Tyler." (*The letter is passed among rebels. Unable to read, they scrutinize it awkwardly*)
FORST. (*Aside*) How many may we count on, captain, here?
JOCK. Clifton for fifty, Down and Dale a hundred,
Wilton,—
NED. Four score.
JOCK. Two hundred in the round.
FORST. Well done for Kent!
JOCK. Ay, Sussex, Kent and Surrey
Ne'er lagged in a good cause yet.
FORST. You have the marrow.
TOM. No bloodshed? There'll be letting of blood to-night
Unless we strangle them with thongs.
NED. (*To Forster*) Art sure
'Tis wise to burn the castle?
FORST. Am I sure
'Tis wise to smoke a wolves' den?
NED. (*Holding letter*) Honest Wat
Has writ "no bloodshed."

TOM. Ay, their wedding day.
I say march on to London. The boy-king
Will hear his people and set right the tax.
The Baron's honest. By the mass, he is;
Or he'ld not wed the girl, but drag her —
JOCK. (*Impetuously*) Honest!
Oh, could you feel the bitterness of the wrong
I bore from him, the burning blood would leap
Like wildfire through your veins. Revenge! Your cry
Would jar the holy stillness of the forest.
(*Forster cautions him. He proceeds more lightly*)
But no, what need to speak of private wrongs?
Your king needs gold,—to buy him cloths and banners,
That he may send his idle lords to France,
There to pursue their pastime of the war
With proper pomp and pageantry. He wrings
Three groats from every man from end to end
Of England,—from luxurious lord alike
And famished boor. What's three groats to your Baron?
TOM. A blade of the grass that bursts his ample garners.
JOCK. From you?
NED. A whole years' harvest.
JOCK. Will you bear it?
No, by the fire that flashes in your eyes,
Now you are up and girded, strike! Shake off
This cursed drug of custom, which casts sleep
O'er all the world, and sanctifies foul hell
Because it is. Tom Harvey, you, of all,—
And Peter Dunton, you,—I did not think
To find you two so tender for the castle.
The old black baron dragged your daughters there.
Where's Nell? Where's Kate?
TOM. The devil grind his soul!
REBELS. Amen!
FORST. (*Laughing*) You hate devoutly.
TOM. (*Bitterly*) Twenty years
Black Basil Norman kept his station yonder.
Now with his hunters and his hounds rough-shod
Rode down the growing corn; now marched us serfs,
Yoked two and two like oxen, through his halls
To make curled roysters merry. And if a churl
Dared call on justice for his trampled crops,
His sullied daughters, there's a trap that opens
On the deep tarn beneath yon castle's dungeons.
FORST. 'Tis so in all old England.
NED. (*To Tom*) Think you then
His nephew will be gentler?
TOM. (*Reflecting*) Aye, what does
The foreign vulture in our English skies?
JOCK. Then strike him down!
Long years, you've spanielled, blind,
Your eyes unsealed, you see the bonds that twine you,

Then rend them with the brawn you got by toil.
On to their cursed nest, and all the way
Shout freedom! freedom! Why, the very hills
Will leap for gladness, and the sodden fields
Breed flowers before your path, to hear that word,
That good forefathers' *English* word of freedom!

REBELS. Hear, hear!
Enough of promises! Let's on!

NED. Let's on! One Norman less in Saxon land,—

JOCK. One despot more in hell!

FORST. (*Taking letter*) Let parsons preach
"No bloodshed" I'm a soldier. Blows will tell.

TOM. Ay, *cower's* their cry, and kiss the lash, and say
"I thank you," when the blood spurts from your wounds.
That was the martyrs' way. Do that, who knows,
We'll sanctify and multiply your bones,—

FORST. Soft, comrade!

NED. Soft, Tom!

FORST. I'm no scholar, friends,
But I let holy church's *teachings* be.

TOM. Save in the minor article of — bloodshed.

FORST. Good never came to them—Look here, that blade,
Hacked to the hilt with fifty battles' bruises.
It's served me well,—and why? I had it dipped
At Donna Mary's shrine in Tuscany.
Better believe, believe.

NED. Of course, believe.

JOCK. No Lollards here.

TOM. But not all tales with which
They herd us, trembling, to death's shambles.

FORST. Oh,
Stick to the faith, all's well. As for the rest,
I've not confessed, myself, these — thirty years. (*Grim laughter*)
A plain man's slips will be forgiven, I trow.

JOCK. Tell them how fares the cause.

FORST. London is ours,
The north is all in arms, the west on fire.
Through every southern village, as I passed
I heard the clank of steel. And I can say,
From Tyler's own true lips. the Kentish smith,
He had not looked for coolness here in Clifton.

NED. Who was it spoke of wavering? 'Twas but one
Or two at most.

JOCK. Who's ready to go on?

REBELS. I—I—I—I.

JOCK. Ah, there's my gallant band.
First, I and Forster to the castle post.

FORST. We've bribed a varlet there to filch the keys.

JOCK. These I consign to Forster, and to him
The Wiltons' rousing and the leadership
In to-night's work. His plan, not mine; all his
The glory if we win.

FORST. How can we lose
With fifty score all told?
JOCK. Meanwhile I stalk
The cavalcade, and with my merry men
On their own horses from the Wedding Feast
Steal back the stolen bride. (*Astonishment*)
You stare. Egad,
So will the Norman and his courtier crew,
To see the tidbit ravished from his lips.
Three times I'll sound my bugle-call among them.
Mark how their wheezy drone of pipes and fiddles
Will shrink to silence at its clarion peal. (*Sounds a bold bugle call*)
NED. I had as lief forego my chance of heaven
As such a noonday lark.
JOCK. Winifred lodged
At Wyndham priory, four leagues away,
Secure from harm, with abbess Genevieve,
I'll join you here at curfew in the Den.
With Forster at the head of fifty score——
NED. And keys to unlock portcullis, gate, and postern——
FORST. And hell-fire brewed from Roger Bacon's brand——
TOM. We'll smoke the wolves' den bravely.
JOCK. (*At* C) Curfew hour
Here in the Den, full-armed. Some few,—you, Ned,
And others,—linger on the green to watch.
NED. Tom, follow me by the Daylight Hole. The rest
Out by the river exit, and disperse
Straight to your homes.
TOM. Homes? Call them kennels rather.
NED. Well, homes to us. At curfew, be on hand.
JOCK. The watchword?
FORST. (*At* C) Burn the castle.
ALL. Burn the castle! (*Exeunt rebels* L, *Ned and Tom* R, *Jock and Forster* C D F)

SCENE III.

COURTYARD AT NORMAN CASTLE.

Castle at L, with practicable window, and gate at L 1 E. Small chapel at R, with practicable door and steps. Belfry at R 1 E. Entrance behind chapel at R 3 E. Low wall at rear, with open wicket, and sky-view beyond. Stone bench at L. Rock at C rear. Bernardo discovered detaining Raimond, who is running with two empty candle-sticks from chapel door to gate at L. Charles pompously struts in the back-ground.

BERN. Now, Raimond!
RAIM. Let me go, Bernardo.
BERN. Now, my little lady's lap-dog, what will you do?
RAIM. Let me go for the candles, I tell you. (*Stamps foot*)

CHAS. Abbot Giles! (*Enter from gate at* L, *a portly abbot, preceded by acolytes. All salute. They pass into chapel. Raimond slips by Bernardo, and exit through gate* L I E)

BERN. I say, Charles, prayer must be a powerful antidote to leanness.

CHAS. (*Himself stout*) You are merry this morning.

BERN. Pleasant dreams all night of the feast on the green. You know we are to ride down this afternoon —

CHAS. Yes, I know, after the wedding.

BERN. And give a feast to the Clifton villagers, your precious flock; and my lady is to wear her village dress again and dance once more with the lasses.

CHAS. By the Lord, I'll ask leave of the sheriff to join you.

BERN. Ask leave? Take leave, man! Are you not beadle?

CHAS. (*Importantly*) Aye.

BERN. Bumbailiff?

CHAS. Aye.

BERN. A man of substance in the neighborhood? Substance, Charles. Ha! ha!

CHAS. Aye; but this eviction of the Deans.

BERN. Eviction! Eviction! Nothing but evictions! Keep's doing, and my lord gets the blame of it all. A worm-eaten walnut for Keep and his hangdogs! I would they were housed elsewhere. I'faith they will be soon, if the baron goes on ridding us of his uncle's placemen. First, Reynard, then Bertram, the seneschal. Marvin Keep's turn next, I fancy.

CHAS. Then ho, for the baron's ale!

BERN. And a romp with the village girls!

HUB. (*Entering* L I E) And a bout with the village wrestlers!

BERN. Aha, Hubert!

RAIM. (*From castle window*) Guards. guards!

BERN. Hello, what's the news?

RAIM. The cook has burned her fingers.

HUB. Very sad!

RAIM. And there's something good in the pantry for her particular friend, Bernardo, and the worthy beadle, Charles.

CHAS. and BERN. Me?

RAIM. Both. (*Disappears*)

BERN. Shall we go?

CHAS. I breakfasted very lightly this morning.

BERN. The abbot has only just come. It will take an hour to marry them.

CHAS. I'm with you. (*Exeunt* L I E. *Choir sings hymn from chapel. Hubert at* R *front, leaning on lance. Enter* L I E *Marvin Keep, and passes up at* L, *across to* R, *spying around, keys jangling at his girdle*)

KEEP. Guard Hubert, have you found my keys about?

HUB. Not I.

KEEP. The old rusty bunch, I mean, that hung in the black baron's chamber.

HUB. Neither that nor any other. (*Apart*) He snarls as if he thought I had stolen his janglers. (*Re-enter Raimond* L I E, *carefully carrying lighted candles in the candlesticks*)

RAIM. Tit for tat!

HUB. (*Smiling*) Well?

RAIM. (*Turning completely 'round*) "Little lady's lap-dog!" I tell you these nicknames stick to a man.

KEEP. (*At* C *rear, sneering*) Man! (*Exit* R 3 E)

RAIM. You crabbéd old crow!

HUB. (*Laughing*) Take care. Nicknames stick, you said. (*Hymn from chapel*)

RAIM. There! I knew I'ld be late; but they wont plague me again in a hurry. Called my sword a darning-needle, too, the other day. (*Exit, grumbling, through chapel door*)

CHAS. and BERN. (*Within*) Ho, there! Ho, Hubert! Unbolt the door? Unbolt-the-arsenal-door! Hubert! Hubert! Ho, there, Hu—bert! (*Meanwhile enter Blind Robin* R U E *and comes down front through gate in wall. He carries a wallet at one side and gropes with a staff. Hubert crosses to* L *front*)

ROB. I give you good morrow, guard Hubert.

HUB. (*Apart*) Strange how he knows us. (*Aloud*) Good morrow is watchword enough to-day, Blind Robin. Have you come up for an alms this morning?

ROB. With a message, guard Hubert.

HUB. For whom?

ROB. For Winnie Darling.

HUB. Rest here, then, and you shall see her soon,—but no longer as Winnie Darling. (*Robin to bench at* L. *Hubert slips a coin in his wallet*)

HUB. (*Apart*) Poor lad! (*Enter* L U E *Merry Andrew, comes down* L, *stealthily, picks Robin's wallet of the coin, and exit* R 3 E. *The organ meanwhile plays and Hubert, leaning on spear, at* R *front, whistles softly the air of the hymn*)

ROB. Are not the people happy, Hubert?

HUB. Happy? What makes you ask, my lad?

ROB. Because they say
Whenever I pass, with whisper low, "Poor Robin."
They call me poor, yet I am very happy.
How happy must they be who call me poor. (*Re-enter Charles and Bernardo* L 1 E, *crestfallen and blackened*)

HUB. I cannot speak for rogues and cozeners,
With honest folk, I think, the world wags well.

BERN. Well?

CHAS. Ill!

HUB. With honest folk I said. What has befallen?

BERN. I have.

CHAS. Twenty feet from the arsenal window.

BERN. He dragged us with him into the refectory. "Here's Blanche," said the rogue with a laugh, and slipped out like an eel and bolted the door. Then we waited. Then we shouted. Didn't you hear us?

HUB. I?

BERN. No answer. "This will never do," said Charles. "We must climb up into the arsenal," said I. So up we went through the chimney.

CHAS. Hence this soot.

BERN. But the rogue had been there before us. Bolted in again. "We must hang from the window," said I. So I dropped.

CHAS. And I dropped.

BERN. And here we are.

HUB. Good!

CHAS. and BERN. (*Limping*) Good! (*Re-enter Merry Andrew* R 2 E)

HUB. Merry weather's no test of a temper.

BERN. Right, camerado. A smile heart-deep, that wont rub off, for me! I remember when Reynard was jester here in the old black baron's time—

M. A. Oh, the rafters rang with wassail cheer
And puling was a crime.

RAIM. (*Appearing suddenly on chapel steps at* R) Ring, guards, ring! My lord has married my lady. (*Hubert and Bernardo spring to belfry-rope at* R 1st E; *organ-music and bells*)

RAIM. Let all the valley hear the good tidings. Ring! Ring! Ring! Ring! (*Disappears. Pause of expectation. Enter* L U E *Jock o' Dean and Forster, who come down front*)

FORST. Is this an alarum against us or—?

JOCK. (*With pretended indifference*) The wedding bells. (*Forster whistles the rebel signal toward castle. Chapel doors suddenly flung open*)

FORST. Ware! Ware! (*Enter girls strewing flowers, Baron and Winifred, Sir Frank Romaines, knights, ladies, etc., in bridal procession. Jock and Forster behind rock*)

FORST. Your grip is like a wild-cat's claw.

JOCK. Your pardon.

ROB. (*Dozing*) Some one is coming. Alms, my lord and ladies.

BAR. Who's this bright curly-head?

ROB. Blind Robin, sir,
Just wandering through Clifton by the Dale.

BAR. Blind? But who finds the way for you, my lad?

ROB. Who finds the way, sir?

WIN. Robin knows the way.

HUB. He cometh to the castle oft, my lord.

BAR. Know you the boy, my love?

WIN. These many years.

ROB. 'Tis Lady Winnie, by the voice, God bless her!
God's mother make the Baron love her true!

WIN. God's mother make me merit his true love! (*They smile. Robin searches in his bosom*)

BAR. Wouldst come to live with us here in the castle?

ROB. Nay, master, Wilton village is my home.

BAR. And play with Raimond, my pert page from France?
I wager in all the valley's villages

There's not a hearth so happy as my castle.
And here's a cross of gold you'll wear from me.—(*Aside*)
A bauble, love, I won at chess from Frank.

SIR FR. Yes, swept my knights and castles with his bishop.

M. A. (*Officiously*) Proving the church is mightier than the state. (*Sir Frank eyes him. Winifred pins cross on Robin*)

JOCK. (*Behind rock*) How like a violet of the vale she blooms
'Mid all those hot-house flowers of indolence!

FORST. There's Frank Romaines. I served with him in Flanders.

WIN. The bright cross. See, it sparkles o'er with jewels.

ROB. Oh, does it sparkle?

BAR. Like fair ladies' eyes.
We'll have the little blind boy for your page, love.

SIR FR. Wants but the quiver to be cupid's double.

ROB. Ah, there it is. A parcel for my lady.

WIN. For me? Pray, who's the sender?

ROB. Madam Dean.

JOCK. What's this?

WIN. (*Agitated*) The favor that I worked for Jock.

BAR. It is no tidings of ill hap, beloved,
That meet us on the threshold?

WIN. Nay.

BAR. You blanch.
This is the lily's color, and I thought
The flower I kissed before God's altar-rail
A rose.

WIN. Sad memory of my maidenhood
Checks in my cheek the surging.

BAR. Only that?

WIN. No more.

BAR. Ah, sweetheart, heaven forbid your foot
Should stumble on an evil omen now.

WIN. A present from the village—from my kinswomen.

BAR. (*Smiling*) What, has their wrath relented, then, so far?
(*Exit procession* L I E. *Business for Merry Andrew*)

BERN. Who *is* this?

HUB. Only that old hanger-on of Reynard's.

BERN. What, he that makes ballads, like Piers the Plowman? (*Business*) A scurrilous lampoon, you rogue! Ha! ha! ha! (*Re-enter acolytes and abbot, shoving Raimond before him. Guards mock Raimond. Exeunt Charles, abbot and acolytes* L I E)

M. A. (*Mocking abbot*) Benedicite, *ghostly* father!

BERN. Ghostly? Abbot Giles ghostly?

HUB. (*To Robin*) Come, lad, you're to live in the castle now. Lock arms with this saucy Raimond.

BERN. Well chastised for his sauciness, I observe.

RAIM. (*Mocking*) So *I* dropped — and *I* dropped.

HUB. He's a living charm for the prevention of melancholy.

BERN. Melancholy? What's that?

M. A. Own brother to dulness, and the two my foes.

HUB. (*To Robin*) He'll have you smiling in no time.

RAIM. That I will, Robin. Isn't your name Robin? (*Calls*) Charles! Charles!

CHAS. (*Re-appearing* L I E) Well?

RAIM. (*Mocking*) Ill! (*Exit Charles in dudgeon*) He's a regular old turkey-gobbler. But come with me and I'll show you all over the castle. First we'll visit,—let me see, I think we'ld better begin with (*Peeping into Robin's wallet*) h'm! —the pantry. (*Robin Smiles. Exeunt* L I E *Robin and Raimond, then Hubert, closing gate on Merry Andrew who tries to enter. Merry Andrew up stage at* L. *Jock and Forster down at* R. *Merry Andrew watches them and crosses to* R. *Exit* R 3 E)

JOCK. I could not see her face.

FORST. 'Twas Norman, then,
Came first?

JOCK. (*Scornfully*) That gallant lance, the cream and flower
Of knighthood.

FORST. So they sound his praise?

JOCK. (*Fiercely*) They l—flatter. (*With pathos*)
Could you have known me ere he came among us,
Love-blest and happy-hearted. All my days
Flowed in a smooth and running rhythm of peace.
You see me what I am. That gentle bride,—
She loved me once. He wheedled her away.
I had no lisping French to woo her with,
No studied phrases from the troubadours,
No castle and no name, "my lady," to tempt her—

FORST. You say the damsel loved—

JOCK. Last hallowe'en
He brought her here from Clifton to be schooled
To fit her for his bride,—my flower, my pearl.
High rose the revelry, gay whirled the dance,
Without, my heart was breaking in the cold.
You smile at that. Fool! Have you never loved?

FORST. Nay, you are wrong, by—

JOCK. Jesu, how I suffered!
Without yon gate I stood,—snow girdle-deep,
Cold that would freeze the marrow of the stoat,
And all my brain on fire,—when Marvin Keep,
The castle warden, on his midnight rounds,
Issuing thence, espied me in the dark,
And with an oath and "Lurk'st thou, varlet, here?"
He raised his whip and lashed me like a dog.
Then all the pent up rebel in my soul
Mastered. This right hand felled him in his blood.
I fled. The hireling judge proclaimed it felony,
And gladly Conrad Norman signed my sentence.
He crossed me in my love; he made me outlaw.
Today he holds his Wedding Feast.

FORST. Soho!
And you at noon—?

JOCK. That finished, on to London!

FORST. Well, blows will tell. It makes a soldier itch,
This parleying and truce-patching up in London.
JOCK. She's mine. No lord shall steal her.
FORST. By my faith,
When I was last in England, 'twas with pikes,
Not prayers, we won our battles.
(*Jock distracted at* L *front*, *Forster at* C)
FORST. Solid rock.
I see no slit or loop in all its armor.
With fifty archers and a breath of warning
I'ld hold it in the teeth of half an army.
The saints forbid our varlet should prove faithless.
(*Whistle from within. Forster answers*)
JOCK. (*Over path of flowers*)
Their path all strewn with smiling roses—Mine!
(*A massive bunch of keys is thrown over gate at* L 1 E. *Jock catches them. Re-enter Marvin Keep* R 3 E, *followed shortly by Merry Andrew, pointing. Merry Andrew pulls belfry rope at* R 1 E. *Alarm. Keep from behind attempts to stab Jock. Forster warns him. Jock tosses keys to Forster. Exit Forster* R U E)
JOCK. Coward! Spy! Seducer! That for myself!
That for the cause! That for the blush of shame
You reddened on the cheek of Kitty Dean!
(*Stabs him thrice. Gay music from the castle. Jock shakes the bloody dagger*)
JOCK. Oh, revel! Ill you built your marriage joy,
On the foundation of a broken heart,
Winifred Norman!
(*Exit* R U E, *leaping wall. Guards and Charles rush out* L 1 E)
M. A. (*At* R *front, pointing*) Jock o' Dean! (*Hubert and Bernardo up stage. Charles supports Keep*)
KEEP. A priest! A priest! (*Bernardo at rear aims his bow quickly to* R, *downward, and shoots. Arrow twangs. Curtain. Gay music from castle continues*)

ACT II

CLIFTON GREEN.—THE WEDDING FEAST.

An arch of welcome at C rear, and two arches flanking it diagonally at R U E and L U E. Green carpet. Trees. A double throne of rustic pattern on a platform at R. Table and chairs at R front. Stage filled with villagers. Enter Raimond L U E, coming down C, followed by two servitors, wheeling a monstrous hogshead.

RAIM. Who'll show me the way to Clifton Green? (*Villagers point*)

MARION. You come from the castle, I dare say?

RAIM. I come from Baron Norman with a tun of ale for his liegemen of the village. (*Cheers. Hogshead placed at* L *front*)

M. A. (*Entering with a lout at* R U E) Here we are!

VILLAGERS. (*Turning*) Who, the Baron?

M. A. No, me and Billy Pumpkin. (*Comes down* C) Droll! Droll! Droll! "If I catch Merry Andrew," Charles, the beadle, was saying, "that unshriven rogue,"—so he was pleased to call me,—"at any of his didoes to-day, I'll have him soused in the mill-pond and whipped a-scamper out of the parish." Droll! Droll! I say. A Baron that wed's a yeoman's daughter, and a beadle that would stop the good loose prattle of a (*Slapping lout*) Hail-Jolly-Johnnie like me.

RAIM. This must be the fool of the family. What's your name?

M. A. Dickon.

RAIM. Then go to the dickens. Tra, la, la! (*Goes up stage and exit* L U E)

VOICES. (*Outside*) Here they come! (*Villagers to arch at* L U E) The Baron! My lady! Huzza! (*Music of village minstrels*)

FR. (*Outside*) Your squires may tie the horses at the bushes. (*Enter* L U E *villagers, cheering, then under arch at* C *rear, village minstrels, preceding the Baron, Winifred, with rich cloak over village dress, two haughty bridesmaids, Sir Frank Romaines, Friar Nod, Hubert, Bernardo, Robin and Raimond, dressed alike as pages, knights and Charles*)

FR. This way, my lord and lady to the thrones
Where you shall overlook our simple pastimes.
(*Baron and Winifred and bridesmaids to thrones at* R, *Sir Frank and Robin on platform steps, knights behind, Hubert and Bernardo to table at* R *front. Friar, Charles and Raimond variously occupied among villagers*)

FR. Ready for the march, children! (*Villagers line up two deep at* L, *facing thrones. Crowding, etc. Merry Andrew comes over to guards at* R *front*)

FR. Now! (*Villagers wheel twos right, cross stage at rear* L *to* R, *and come down by thrones. Minstrels, pretty couples, bumpkins. Baron and Winifred acknowledge*

curtsies. Meanwhile Merry Andrew tips off Charles's hat at R *front*)

BERN. Put on your beaver, Charles, or the June-flies will be making for that tonsure of yours.

CHAS. Ill comes to them that jibe at a natural misfortune!

M. A. It's natural for beadles to be bald.

CHAS. (*Fiercely*) Why is it natural for beadles to be bald?

M. A. Because they are born that way.

BERN. Ha! ha! ha! This is an incorrigible dry jester.

M. A. Let me rhyme you the villagers' mottoes off-hand.

HUB. Have they mottoes, too? (*He displays Baron's banner with motto, "Vince Magnanimitate"*)

BERN. I thought only dukes and tavern-keepers indulged in such luxuries.

M. A. The butcher's is "Carve;" the soapmaker's "Try;"
The notary public's "Be sure and be sharp:"
The Doctor of medicine's "Diet or die;"
The beadle's "I come to carp."

BERN. Ha! ha! ha! Charles! He's a rhymester, the rogue.

CHAS. (*Offended*) Cheap!

BERN. Well jingled! Another!

RAIM. (*At* L) I'll do at a pinch, won't I Marion? (*Pinches her and parades with her in the procession. A chatterbox comes by in procession*)

M. A. I'm Miss Margery Pye,
And I stoutly deny
That the friar, knowing what I most sin at,
The last time I confessed
Said "For penance, go rest
Your long tongue the whole tenth of a minute."

BERN. Ha! ha! I've heard of Mag Pye. (*A widow*)

M. A. Here's Mistress Dorothy Soulful,
With a keen sense of the doleful.
Shrove Tuesday her Timothy lost his life,
Still she wipes the tears from each trembling lid, oh!
For seventeen years an indifferent wife,
And now a *devoted* widow.

BERN. Ha! ha! Here's to faithful Dolly! Heaven send her a better than Timothy! She ogled me, the witch; she ogled me, Hubert. (*Etc., ad libitum. End of procession*)

M. A. (*Loudly*) My, this will make the baron too proud, to have all the aristocracy out to meet him. (*Baron turns his head. Merry Andrew, seeing his chance, steals fiddle at* R *front, the minstrels being interested in the hogshead, and moves to* C) My lord, do you love music?

FR. What does the rogue mean?

M. A. I would sing you a pretty witty ditty that I made.

BAR. On what subject?

M. A. I am Edgar L'Estrange, the troubadour, and I sing of nothing but love. (*Strumming*)
Love's a little goblin,
Marriage is a bridge.

Arm and arm with lads and lasses
To the river's brink he passes,
Then with ah's and with alases,
Sighs the cunning, fickle midge,
"Nay, I may not cross a bridge:
Nay, I may not cross a bridge."

SIR FR. A pretty blessing he offers.

MAR. (*To Raimond*, L) Why, he's mocking the Baron. (*Charles interferes. Business for Merry Andrew*)

BAR. Who is the minstrel that made such untuneful music?

WIN. That was Merry Andrew.

FR. A famous jester of the village, my lord.

SIR FR. Why does he edge near us constantly as if he were addressing his fooleries to the Baron?

FR. It is his strange ambition, Sir Knight, to succeed the jester of my lord's late uncle, one Reynard by name. It was he taught Andrew many of his tricks,—especially this pestilent habit of rhyming; and from him he borrowed that suit of motley he wears.

SIR FR. It has seen good service, by the patches.

M. A. (*At* L) The friar has kept his promise. They are talking about me. Good! Good! Keep it up, Andrew, keep it up! (*Business. Villagers guffaw*)

BAR. (*Watching him*) So? (*Merry Andrew out at* L 2 E)
You had a fancy, love, to dance again
Your girlhood dances?

WIN. Would it become me, think you?

FR. Gracious deeds
Become even queens, my lady.

BAR. Go, my love,
We'll watch you from the thrones. (*Winifred throws back cloak, revealing village costume. Raimond and Baron assist her to descend. Girls shyly kiss her hand*)

SIR FR. (*Yawning*) A pest on love!
Conrad, your eyes see nothing but your wife.

BAR. What is it, Frank?

SIR FR. As we're not happy bridegrooms,
We're like to die of gaping in the sun
At these tame dances. There's a roomy field
Beyond the bushes where the sweets are spread,
Across the road; and by your leave we'll wrestle,
And test the village archers there a bit.

BAR. With all my heart. I should have thought of it. (*Sir Frank comes down to Hubert and Bernardo, who have been well supplied from the hogshead by Raimond. Charles occasionally joins them*)

MAR. (*At* C) And were you truly married, Winifred?

WIN. As truly as abbot Giles could marry us.

MAR. And in the chapel with the candles lighted,
All golden, and the solemn organ playing?

WIN. Yes, Marion.

MAR. Ah, might I be married so!

SIR FR. (*Loudly*) A stout yew-bow to him that sends a shaft
Beyond my squire, Bernardo.
BAR. And this purse
To him that bests stout Hubert with the staff.
YOUTHS. Now here'll be sport.
MAR. Come, Harold, have a try.
KNIGHTS. Let's see the games.
HUB. Lean striplings, every one.
BAR. Tug for the fame of Clifton now, my liegemen. (*Exeunt* L U E *Sir Frank, Hubert, knights and youths. Raimond flirts with Marion. Bernardo and Charles remain at table, drinking,—Charles more and more pompous, Bernardo more and more jovial. Winifred and girls make ready to dance. Re-enter merry Andrew* L 3 E *and comes down to* C *front*)
M. A. (*Apart*) I'll practice on the page.
RAIM. (*Apart*) Oh, you will?
M. A. Hello, here's Hop-o'-my-Thumb, the king of the midgets, making love to Marion.
BERN. (*Jealous*) To Marion? Oh, no!
M. A. Two feet high and a century old in his doublet and hose.
MAR. Twelve years and a half you mean.
M. A. Just half as old as his partner, then.
MAR. The Idea!
M. A. And she's just half as old as the beadle.
BERN. Ha! ha! ha! fifty, camerado!
CHAS. Psh!
M. A. And Charles is just half as old as the friar.
BERN. (*Rapping glass*) Good! Jolly! Jolly!
CHAS. More ale!
M. A. And so on up to Mathusalem. (*To Raimond*) Can you tell a duck from a goose?
RAIM. Yes,—you're not a duck.
BERN. Good for the midget.
WIN. What shall the first dance be, the ring-dance? Come. Choose partners. Lay our bonnets on the grass. (*Winifred and girls dance a country dance*)
BAR. How quaint and modest are these village dances!
BERN. Did you see how jolly Andrew trounced the midget? Ha! ha! ha!
CHAS. More ale!
BAR. Is it my eye is rosy-steeped in love,
Or are my folk so happy as they seem,
This festal day? What mean these rude alarms,
Uprisings, marches, and wild shrieks of war,
That startle the sweet peace of England's homes?
FR. Remember, this is holiday, my lord.
To-morrow will be working-day again,
And many other morrows.
BAR. They taste less,
Poor toilers, of the honey of life than we.
I pray you, dance again.

WIN. The wide ring, now.
Everybody join. Come, Marion, Alice, Kate.
(*All except Baron, Friar, Robin and Bridesmaids join hands. Bernardo and Raimond have a tiff over Marion*)

M. A. Rope the friar in, too. (*Catches him inside circle*) You shan't get out till you dance, Friar Nod.

MAR. With Winifred.

RAIM. With my lady.

FR. Children! Children! (*Winifred joins him in middle. All dance about, till at last friar taps his feet and joins*!

WIN. Heaven bless our good friar!

ALL. Amen!

FR. (*Out of breath*) That was my—first attempt—

BAR. A most successful beginning. My lady must have you for a partner again.

RAIM. A chair to rest you, father. (*After all is over Friar has a long fit of laughing. Exit* L 3 E *Merry Andrew. Enter* L U E *Ned Baker and Tom Harvey, coming down to* L *front*)

NED. The fun is high, Tom.

TOM. How many fighting men did you make it?

NED. Less than a dozen. (*Friar sobers up at seeing Ned, beckons to him, and whispers briefly*)

FR. I suppose, Winnie, now that you're going to live in the castle, you'll be a grand court lady like the others.

MAR. (*Aside to girls*) She *is* grown a lady; but not a bit scornful, like the two with their fans and flounces.

FR. I've heard of dames that play all manner of instruments as skilfully as a minstrel, and sing in soft foreign tongues, the Tuscan and the Provençal.

WIN. Why, I know no tongue but our own stubborn Saxon, and no songs but the sweet ballads of the country-folk.

FR. There's my little loyal girl! My simple lark of the meadows!

WIN. Indeed, I am of the meadows. Often I envy the great dames their fine manners, never ill-at-ease or uncertain.

RAIM. Peacocks, my lady! Who cares for them? The lark's a sweeter singer,—and as for the rest, oh, that's all feathers,—just feathers and strut. Village girls for me! (*To Marion*)

MAR. We've a secret for you, Winifred.

WIN. Oh, tell me! (*Marion whispers*) Over in the meadow? Let's go! (*Winifred and girls start up stage. The bridesmaids descend haughtily from thrones*)

RAIM. Your peacocks, my lady!—I mean,—I mean,—your bridesmaids, my lady! (*Exeunt Winifred, girls and bridesmaids* R U E, *Winifred throwing kisses to Baron. Friar with Baron, Raimond with Charles and Bernardo. Cheers from* L U E *and cries of "Harold"*)

FR. That's a village cheer. Harold has won the knight's bow.

BAR. We have able archers, I hear, in Clifton. (*Enter* L 3 E *Merry Andrew and several urchins, masked to represent a goose, fox, dragon, bear, etc. They drag a cart with curtained booth*)

M. A. (*Aside*) You start it, Oliver, you're the biggest. Then let the rest join in. (*Aloud*) My lord—holy friar—fellow-townsmen.

FR. What now? (*Raimond puts finger in dragon's mouth, gets bitten and punishes dragon*)

M. A. In honor of the happy event which we celebrate to-day, I have devised a most edifying mystery-play for my lord's delectation.

CHAS. Isn't this [hic] improper, Bernardo?

BERN. Go it, bully Andrew!

FR. These mysteries, as now enacted by laymen, often smack of impiety.

M. A. Impiety! Oh, your reverence! It is full of grave matter, taken from the scripture, and entitled "Eve, Adam, and the Devil."

VILLAGERS. Give it to us, Merry Andrew.

BERN. I like the Devil. (*Curtain of booth drawn aside. Parody ad libitum on an ancient mystery. Guffaws. Curtain of booth closed*)

BERN. Ha! ha! I always did like the Devil.

CHAS. (*Reeling* R *to* C) This is [hic] highly improper, before the baron. (*Business between Charles and Merry Andrew*)

URCHINS. (*At* C *rear*) Did you ever see pompous Charles
Bullying tipsy carles?
Hands in the pillory, feet in the stocks,
Head thrust through for the rabble's mocks.
"Oh, this is the physic and this is the dose
For such carles!"
Snarls
Charles.

(*Curtains of booth drawn asunder, showing effigy of Charles in stocks and pillory*)

CHAS. Monstrous impudence!

FR. Tut! tut! Who are these?

RAIM. Merry Andrew's admirers. (*Charles staggers out after urchins* R U E. *Raimond orders villagers to drag booth out* L 3 E. *Bernardo asleep*)

BAR. What did you say the jester's name is?

FR. Andrew, my lord. Merry Andrew we call him.

M. A. (*At* L, *cunningly watchful*) He is talking about me again,—asking my name, I wager.

BAR. *Merry* Andrew. H'm! He makes the rustics laugh. It is peppered for those of strong relish.

M. A. And marking me out for the wittiest wag.

FR. Shall I bid him desist, my lord?

BAR. Oh, no!

M. A. Good! Good! Keep it up, Andrew, Keep it up! (*Business*)

BAR. Let the clown have his day. But if I should maintain a jester (and that I will leave to Winifred) It shall be some keen Frenchman or Italian dwarf, full of delicate thrusts at our foibles,—some moralist who preaches by ridicule,—

RAIM. Like the hunchback we saw at Padua, my lord?

BAR. Yes. Hardly such a discordant buffoon as this.

M. A. Keep it up, Andrew. (*Cheers from* L U E *and cries of "Hubert"*)

RAIM. The other side, now.
FR. We were beaten in something.
BAR. Hubert has no match living at a yeoman's sports.
M. A. (*At* L) Aha, Ned Baker; just my man.
BAR. If Winifred were here, she could give out the prizes.
FR. They are over in the meadow. I'll summon her, my lord. (*Exit* R U E)
BAR. (*To Raimond*) Hear them. (*Roundelay from* R U E)

Sweet Winnie Darling she was christened.
To her cottage shady
Came a lord with a ring that glistened;
Now she is my lady.
Now she is my lady;
Now she is my lady.
Sweet Winnie Darling she was christened.
Now she is my lady.

(*Meanwhile Merry Andrew approaches Ned at* L *front*)
M. A. How fares Jock, Ned?
NED. What's that, you meddling,—
M. A. Soft! I'm only one tough arm the more to crack heads with. Where's the meeting-place?
NED. You—by heaven, I mistrust you!
M. A. I swear on the cross, I'm honest, Ned.
NED. If you tattle, it won't be the first time—
M. A. I had it from Peter the game was afoot.
NED. But it will be the last.
M. A. He bade me come to you. Where do we meet?
NED. (*Reluctantly*) The Witches' Den.
M. A. What hour?
NED. Curfew.
M. A. How many?
NED. Fifty score all told.
M. A. What's the game?
NED. To burn the castle.
TOM. Hist!
NED. You mind what I said.
BAR. (To Raimond) The knights are returning. (Re-enter L U E Sir Frank Romaines, Hubert and youths, one with a new bow. They come down C. Jock o' Dean's bugle-call heard outside. Ned and Tom start)
SIR FR. A village youth won the bow. Where was Bernardo?
RAIM. Here! (Shakes him) Weighted down with some dozens of bumpers of Ale. He has half that hogshead inside of him.
BERN. (Waking) I do like the Devil! Go it, bully Andrew! (Enter C rear Jock o' Dean)
SIR FR. But as for quarter-staff sport, I thought you English were masters of that. If there's none can prove his title to it better than the three who went down so quickly on yonder field, the purse of gold goes to Hubert.
JOCK. (Coming forward) She is not here.
BAR. Come, lads, Harold has won the bow. Who'll be champion of the village against Hubert once more. (Long hesitation)

BAR. And lady Winifred shall award him the prize. None?
JOCK. Yes. One! (Commotion)
NED. (At L front) Rash! Rash!
M. A. (At L front) It's Jock o' Dean! I am the Baron's jester!
BAR. Are you a liegeman of ours?
JOCK. Clifton *was* my home.
SIR FR. Strip, then, and let us see the bout.
NED. Careful, Jock!
JOCK. None of them know me. (They battle with quarter-staffs. Jock wins. A cheer)
SIR FR. (At R) It's the boor's own weapon, and he took you tired.
HUB. No, Sir Frank, I was fairly beaten.
BAR. Manfully spoken, my manful Hubert! (Holding purse) How shall we name the winner?
JOCK. Let that pass.
SIR. FR. You have done what no man ever did before.
BAR. We should be better known. Enter my service,
And make the third, with Hubert and Bernardo,
Of my picked body guard.
JOCK. (Still breathing hard) You honor me.
BAR. And you, my honest liegemen of the village,
We should be better known. Good friar Nod
Has told me of sundry youths among you, driven
By hunger's cruel pinch to lawless courses.
To such the warm right hand of clemency
I would extend. It is my Christian faith
That when the final reckoning is taken,
Upon the velvet shoulders of the rich
Shall poor men's crimes be laid. Therefore, I swear
Upon my honor as our Lady's knight,
Within a league of Norman castle, none
Shall fast while I have wherewithal to feed them.
(Commotion)
Further, in witness of my happy union,
And that the Wedding Feast on Clifton green
May be a joyful memory among you,
Twelve of my serfs,—the most deserving twelve,—
Whom Friar Nod shall name,—shall be set feee,
And date their freedom by the blessed hour
When Winnie Darling became Lady Norman.
(Commotion. Jock rigid at C)
A FEW. Cheers for Lady Winnie!
TOM. (L front) By the cross,
The Baron's honest, Ned.
NED. (Watching Jock) It's all a mask. (Meanwhile Merry Andrew slinks up stage at L, crosses L to R and comes down R behind villagers, outlaws and throne, to Sir Frank at R front)
BAR. Far be it from me to push beyond the bounds
Of courtesy my wishes, stalwart champion.
Your bearing and your accent are so gallant,
Your features fair—

JOCK (Breaking out) By deeds a man is tried.
Fair features are as empty as glib words.
BAR. True. You are knightly minded.
JOCK. Conrad Norman,
You spoke of youths driven to desperate courses.
There was one such in Clifton.
BAR. Tell me of him.
JOCK. This for his nature. If it had grave faults
(And who, not more than mortal, lacks his share)
They were not of the heart. He suffered wrong.
A Baron—of your rank—stole that away
Which was the sun and centre of his life,
Yes, more. his life itself essayed to steal,
And doomed the blameless women of his blood,
Mother and sister, pure as ever prayed
For son and brother's weal,
To wander houseless on the barren moors.
Then was his spirit clouded. Impulses
Malign shot through it, like the lightning-streaks
That for one sudden moment all the heavens
Illume,—and then the world is darker for them.
ROB. (At L front) What is Jock saying, Raimond?
RAIM. Jock who?
NED. (To Robin) Sh!
BAR. I pity him. Where dwells he now?
JOCK. He fights
For Walter Tyler.
SIR FR. That disloyal boor
Who barks and clamors at the gates of London?
JOCK. The smith who in the glory of free manhood
Dares hold himself the equal of a king!
BAR. Who was this youth, so wronged?
JOCK. All know him here.
They know who stocked their larders in the winter,
Who heaped the poor man's fagot-pile by night,
Who held the wolf from Widow Samson's door,—
They know, and bless him,—the accursed, with price
Upon his head, they bless him! Yes. my lord.
This branded felon, whom an unjust judge
(His ermine spattered o'er with spots of blood)
Has made it law to harry like a wolf,
Might stand within your midst this very hour
And yet be not betrayed!
SIR FR. How not betrayed?
M. A. (R front) Sir Knight!
JOCK. Who *dare* betray him?
(Merry Andrew edges away confused) Unless some dog
That has no fear of good men's execration,
The jeers of children in the public ways,
And women's pointed fingers!
M. A. (Apart) What care I
So I be the Baron's jester?

BAR. Such a youth
So loved, might be won back to straighter courses.
His name?
JOCK. Is Jock o'Dean.
M. A. (To Sir Frank, again) Sir Knight!
SIR FR. (Intent on Jock) Begone!
BAR. I never heard his name.
JOCK. You never heard m—
BAR. And yet you move me in the wretch's favor
As if it were your own cause that you pleaded.
JOCK. (Apart) He never heard my name?
HUB. 'Twas some such churl
Slew Marvin Keep, my lord.
BAR. Not unprovoked
That blow, I well believe. Fell Keep, the last
Of my black uncle's crew. (Laughter of girls from R U E)
RAIM. Here comes my lady,
With Marion and the lasses clustered round her,
All like a wreath of roses in the sunset. (Pale red light. Enter R U E Winfred and girls,—a basket of trinkets in Winifred's hands. She passes L of Jock)
JOCK. (Apart) My God, how can you smile so, Winnie Darling?
BAR. Your bright eyes show the happiness within.
WIN. [On throne] Such a surprise as Marion puts upon me.
Look, this—and this—and this,—the lasses' gifts,
To show I am not forgot in Clifton yet.
BAR. You come in season to bestow the prize
Upon the champion stavesman of the games.
WIN. [Taking purse] Gladly. Which is the champion stavesman?
JOCK. I! [Holds out hand. She recognizes him]
WIN. [Agitated, but with dignity and kindness]
Gladly I share the surplus of my joy
Upon this happiest of all days to me
With one I know so worthy, one of old
So near to me in blood, so kind in deed,
I loved him as a brother.
JOCK. Thanks, my lady! [Suddenly he tosses purse to L, Merry Andrew greedily capturing it, and blows his bugle-call loudly. Enter outlaws R 3 E and climb thrones behind Baron and Winifred]
SIR FR. What means this rigmarole? How the fellow stares
At lady Winifred!
BAR. [Apart] I understand. [Jock raises bugle to lips for the third call. Aloud] And gladly I, to cap our Feast's rejoicings,
Acting by special favor for the crown,
Here, in the King's name, pardon and absolve
From every mulct and stain of his offences,
That son of Clifton, pleaded for so nobly,
The outlaw, Jock o'Dean! [Jock hesitates in long bewilderment, bugle very slowly lowered from lips]
FR. [Outside and entering R U E] My lord! Grave news!
Wat Tyler's taken and slain!

ALL. Wat Tyler slain! [Jock rushes to C front. Ned to Jock. Outlaws withdraw to C rear]

FR. [At C] A rider just flew by.
At Smithfield Tyler braved the king. Bold Walworth,
The mayor of London, pierced him with his sword,
Then were the rabble leaderless, when lo!
The boy-king cried "*I* am the people's leader!"
And led them to the fields of Islington.

BAR. Cheers for old England and the brave boy-king! [Cheers. Chimes heard]

FR. The angelus is ringing. [All, except Jock cross themselves]

BAR. Let us thank Heaven. [Kneels. All follow, except Jock,—outlaws, Ned and Tom, last. Hubert exibits Baron's banner with motto. Winifred bursts into tears and Baron puts his arm around her. An impulse of jealous rage seizes Jock, who draws dagger and advances a step toward throne. The first note of the hymn checks him]

ALL CHANT. Ave Maria, gratia plena, dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesu.—Amen.

JOCK. [Dropping dagger] God forgive me! [Kneels, completing angelus tableau]

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Willow Road. Flat at second grooves. Trees at first grooves R and L. Kitty Dean discovered, looking to L.

KIT. You're somewhat troubled for a nine hours' bride.
What can have happened that she turned so pale?
The townsfolk gossip in low and awe-struck tones
As if they'd seen the Virgin.

[Enter Marion and girls at L, Robin and Raimond, followed by Ned Baker, at R]

MAR. Did you note
How Winnie colored Alice? Mark my words,
We haven't seen the end of it.

KIT. [Screened by trees at L] What has happened?

RAIM. I wonder what I'ld do if I were blind.

MAR. You'ld be less the merry madcap that you are.

NED. Marion, Marion, you mustn't be enticing the castle pages with your pretty smiles.

MAR. La, Ned Baker!

RAIM. Enticing me? Oh, no, I'm not old enough for that yet. But when I am—

MAR. When you are?

RAIM. When I am,—why, I'll do the enticing with my own pretty smiles. [Exeunt pages at L]

NED. [Chucking her familiarly] Marion! Marion! [Kitty catches him] Now, don't be jealous, Kitty. It was only fun. [Exeunt Marion and girls at R]

KIT. [Moving to and fro] No,—I—won't. [Exit at L. Enter Sir Frank and Hubert, followed by Merry Andrew at R. Exit Ned after Kitty at L]

SIR. FR. [Laughing] Both tipsy?
They shall walk home for punishment. You say
Blind Robin's safe with Raimond?

HUB. There they go.

M. A. A word with you, sir knight.

SIR FR. Well, fellow!

M. A Sir.
A word with you, alone.

SIR FR. Speak out, sirrah!

M. A. Treason, my lord!

SIR FR. The devil!

M. A. 'Tis a case
Of life or death.

SIR FR. Hubert, walk on a spell. [Exit Hubert L]
I think I marked your face. The cap and bells
Become you.

M. A. Aye, the elder baron Norman
Had promised he would choose me for his fool,
If Reynard, his old jester, left his service.
But when he died--

SIR FR. He lost his tooth for teasing.
Well, to the matter!

M. A. 'Tis from love o' the right
And hatred of dark councils that I speak.
The rebels here, with Jock o' Dean, the outlaw,
Ten hundred strong, attack the castle to-night.

SIR FR. The devil!

M. A. After that march on to London
To join the rebels there.

SIR FR. Not after that.
There'll be no after that. To-night, you say?
How learned you of it? Gods, if they had caught us!
What time and where do they meet? What proof have you,
What proof?

M. A. I knew him by his flaxen curls,
His voice, his matchless skill, his proud speech,—

SIR FR. Whose?

M. A. The stavesman at the feast was Jock o' Dean.

SIR FR. [Startled] Himself, then, was the hero of his tale.
And you—you knew him and were silent!

M. A. Sir,
You know not what a fiend he is to cross.

SIR FR. With all our blades to guard you, your tongue froze.
Bah! Sheer fanfaronade! They'll never come.
[Re-enter Kitty behind trees at L]

M. A. This Dean bears private hatred to the Baron.
He has sworn to make a bonfire of his castle.
SIR FR. No, they'll not trouble us. All you churls are cowards.
You'll fight at odds of nine to one or so.
By heaven, I hope they come! What hour?
M. A. At curfew
They meet.
SIR FR. Look well no soul shall know of this.
To horse!
M. A. My lord!
SIR FR. [Offering purse] Ha! I forgot your pay.
M. A. 'Twas not for gold, sir, that I spoke.
SIR FR. The devil!
'Tis a new brand of yokel nowadays,
Too proud to take his pay.
M. A. [Eagerly] My lord has seen
I have some knack to fling a pleasant jest.
I often met Reynard in wit-combats.
His wit was brackish; mine is tart. In rhymes
He owned I was his match. And my lord knows
How rhyming gives a tang to jester's jibes.
Then I am quick; can turn a handspring, juggle.
Test me, my lord. Invite some day to dinner
The soberest company that you can gather.—
A solemn, hen-pecked judge, that never smiled
Since he was wigged,—squires, bishops, doctors, dons,
I wager I'll capsize their gravity.
Before the banquet's through, I'll have them all
Shrieking with laughter, like a tickled boy.
SIR FR. And so you itch to be the castle jester?
M. A. [Eagerly] Ay! What think you of my chance?
SIR FR. [Deliberately] I think
If you were—somewhat washed,—and duly whipped,—
You'ld make a capital scullion. [Throwing down purse]
The deuce of it
That one must use such traitors! [Exit L]
M. A. [Hoarse with rage] These my thanks?
I would to God that I had let it burn,
You sneering hound!
KIT. *You* hound!—The friar's cell! [Exit behind trees at R]
NED. [Outside] Kitty! [Enter Ned from behind trees at L]
TOM. [At R 1st E] Kitty! [Merry Andrew puts foot on purse.
Meanwhile Bernardo's voice is heard from R singing]

Old Grandmother Bat
Had a heretic cat
That would nibble the bacon on Friday.
You might serve her a dish
Of the daintiest fish,
But she'ld just pull her whiskers more tidy,
Singing "Fol-da-rol-ope
A fig for the Pope—"

[Merry Andrew picks up purse. As he does so Tom meets Ned at C, plucks his arm and points to Merry Andrew]

NED. Kitty! [Exit Ned and Tom behind trees at R and L]

BERN. [Entering at R] Hey, Jolly Andrew, what you picking up there?

M. A. Bramble-berries.

BERN. Guess you don't find many this time o'year, Jolly. [Enter at L Charles holding dragon by the ear. Dragon's head opened back, revealing a ragged urchin]

CHAS. Eh, will you call names?

M. A. [Resuming jester's manner] Dang it, Punch, let the lad be.

BERN. Yes, dang it, let him be.

CHAS. What [hic] language do I hear?

M. A. Well, damn it, then, if you're so particular about your grammar.

BERN. Yes, damn it then, if you're so p'ticul'r 'bout your [hic] grandma.

CHAS. Bernardo, [hic] I'm astonished. Hearing such unusual language from you I am forced to the conclusion that you are [hic] tipsy.

BERN. Only a little jolly, Charles. It's jolly to say damn.

Damn, damn, damn, damn,
Mildam, Amsterdam, beldam, damn-damn.

CHAS. Bernardo —the use of profane language is highly improper, —and not on moral grounds alone—

M. A. It's a bad habit. Bernardo.

BERN. A damned bad habit, Jolly.

CHAS. But on intellectual grounds, also,—intellectual grounds. The man who uses profane language simply cannot articulate the emotions that are surging in his bosom. So he rips out an oath that has no more intelligibility [Urchin blubbers] no more unintelligibility, I say, than the roar of a [hic] nangry lion. [Fox, goose, donkey, etc., appear behind trees at R. Merry Andrew coaches them. Urchin escapes]

Did you ever see pompous Charles
Bullying tipsy carles?
Hands in the pillory, feet in the stocks,
Head thrust through for the rabble's mocks,
"Oh, this is the physic and this is the dose
For such carles,"
Snarles
Charles!

CHAS. [Hic] Damnation! [Exeunt Charles and urchins behind trees at R]

BERN. Ha! Ha! Ha! Wasn't the devil bully? I say, led's play chuck-farthing.

M. A. [Imitating] Can't articulate emozhuns zurging in his bosom.

BERN. Ha! Ha! Ha! Jolly, Andrew, Jolly. Everybody's jolly. I'm jolly. You're jolly. Beadle's jolly.

Old Grandmother Bat
Had a heretic cat, etc. [Exit L]

M. A. [Changing] Scullion!—It *shall* burn.
To the Witch's Den! To the Witch's Den. [Exit behind trees at L]

SCENE II.

Friar Nod's Cell. Flat at third grooves. Table at C, with pitcher, candle and loaf. Door at R in flat. Friar discovered at table, writing.

FR. There are the twelve serfs all written out as freemen. Some will be gladdened and some will be grieved. And lady Winifred [God bless her] has vowed a candelabra for the village chapel. [Rises and removes cowl] Quietly, quietly we do the Lord's work. Isn't this better than your scowling rebellions, Wat Tyler, your futile revolutions of the people? Bubbles all! Bubbles all! [A knock] Come in! [Enter Kitty Dean]

KIT. Oh, friar Nod, save him!

FR. Kitty?

KIT. Jock is betrayed by Merry Andrew.

FR. By whom? Calm yourself, my good girl. Slowly, slowly.

KIT. All day long I kept away from the village, comforting mother at home. But at nightfall something dragged me out. I lurked on the road where their cavalcade was to pass, riding back from the Green to the castle. The lord and she rode at the head. (She looked pale and I did'nt envy her her side-saddle,) then knights, and last of all a knight and a guard, with Merry Andrew,—that leering, crouching, spying—

FR. Well, well!

KIT. There is some plot to burn the castle to-night.

FR. To—Kitty!

KIT. Merry Andrew betrayed him to the knight.

FR. To—burn the castle!

KIT. Oh, friar Nod, save him!

FR. This was the game that brought him to Clifton!
My cowl! I must trudge to the castle.

KIT. Why thither?

FR. To warn the Baron.

KIT. The Baron *is* warned.

FR. And to plead for Jock.

KIT. [Proudly] Plead for him. No.

FR. Not that? [A knock] Who's there?

VOICE. Ned Baker.

KIT. Ned Baker? [Pouting] I won't see him. I hate Ned Baker.

FR. Tut! tut! [Knock] Come in! [Enter Ned. Kitty at L rear]

FR. You came?

NED. For the message, as you bade me, sir.

FR. [Sternly] And well for you, you poacher, you law-breaker, you midnight marauder! And well for you all!

NED [At R, sheepishly, fumbling with cap] Your reverence had A message to Madam Dean.

FR. Ay, a message,—but not to Madam Dean. [Sits at table]

NED. It's near curfew time, your reverence.

FR. Well?

NED. If you delay me long, I'll be late.

FR. For the meeting, eh?

NED. [Apart] Oh, my tattling tongue!

FR. [Writing] I have something here that will spoil your meetings. Ah, Ned Baker, I always took you to be a good respectable boy.

NED. [Apart] I'm in for a rasping now.

FR. You and Kitty Dean meet often nowadays, I hear,—she going to her milking and you to your mowing, of a morning.

NED. Oh—aye, we fall in sometimes.

FR. And fall out, eh? So the gossips are talking.

NED. Oh, they *will* gabble, your reverence.

FR. 'Twas more than gabble, more than gabble, I fear. [Writes] "Ned's jilted the spitfire at last," they say. "She's lost one lad by her temper. Will she ever get another?" [Dumb-show of indignation by Kitty] So they say.

NED. Oh, Kitty and me have our spats, and then we make up again as cosy as our betters. [Kitty pleased]

FR. I know her, the vixen, from so high up. She'll astonish you, Ned, with her tantrums, if ever she gets you. [Kitty indignant]

NED. I like a girl that shows spirit, your reverence. [Kitty pleased]

FR. Oh, you do?

NED. None of your dull, smirking silly Sally Sweeteyes for me.

FR. She'll talk you deaf in a fortnight.

NED. [Laughing] Oh, I never mind it; in one ear and out the other. [Kitty displeased]

FR. Come now, surely you don't think she's pretty? [Kitty interested]

NED. Pretty?

FR. As girls go. Of course, I'm no judge, an old [ha! ha!] old bachelor like me; but I should take (er) Marion to be a comelier lass than Kitty Dean. (Kitty keenly interested)

NED. What! That simpering, saucer-eyed, "Hug-me-tight Orlando," compared with Kitty! (Kitty delighted) Oh, no, Kitty's downright, but she's natural.

FR. (Chuckling, then suddenly serious) Give that to Jock.

NED and KITTY. Jock!

FR. Say I know whereof I write. You'ld do a little turn to save Jock's head, I suppose?

NED. I'ld give my own. (Kitty rushes forward and hugs him)

KIT. Oh, you dear, faithful Ned!

NED. Kitty—you didn't treat me like that on the road, when Marion—

KIT. (Stopping his mouth) Hush! Never mind!

NED. Why, what are those clouds I see in your eyes?

KIT. Look closer. Don't you see a—rainbow, too? (Business of their kissing and Friar's catching them)

FR. Tut! tut!
KIT. Oh, father, we can never repay you.
FR. Pray for me, children. Remember me night and morning when you present your petitions to God. (A bell rings)
NED. Curfew! I'm late for the meeting.
KIT. Run, Ned, run! (Both to D F)
FR. (At L) I dandled him as a babe. I shrived him as a lad. Heaven forgive me if I am abetting him in evil now! (Exit Ned)
KIT. (At D F) Are you sure you have the letter safe? He is too far. Dear friar Nod! (Kisses him rapturously)
FR. (In consternation) That's a mortal sin.

SCENE III.

The Witches' Den. Dark. Rebels with pikes, one with torch.

REBELS. Who's there? (Enter C D F Tom Harvey. Torch flashed upon him)
TOM. Tom Harvey. Are the boys all here?
REBS. Not half yet, and the Dalesmen haven't come. Who's there? (Enter C D F Merry Andrew. Surprise) It's Merry Andrew.
M. A. Is all ready? (Enter C D F Jock o' Dean)
JOCK. Tom, to the castle and call Forster off.
Bid him to meet us at the cross-roads. Thence
We march straightway to London. (Silence. Enter C D F Ned Baker)
NED. Am I late?
A message from the friar.
TOM. For who?
NED. For Jock.
TOM. What's in the friar's message? (Jock reads it by torch, looking at Merry Andrew)
JOCK. "You are betrayed"—
ALL. Betrayed!
M. A. (Apart) Betrayed!
JOCK. "by Merry—Merry Andrew!"
ALL. Betrayed by Merry Andrew!
M. A. It's a lie,
If fifty friars wrote it. Here's my pike
To prove it. I'm for burning the castle—to-night!
JOCK. (Quickly) No more o' that!
M. A. I hate their whole proud crew!
NED. Now, by Saint George, that had the ring of truth.
M. A. (Jesting) As true as fiddler Cob's G string, my hearties.
TOM. (Fiercely) What were you saying to the knight, Romaines, On Willow Road, that time?
M. A. What time? Nothing.
Just bandying a jest. (Purse falls from his bosom)

NED. A purse! Silver.
TOM. 'Twas that we saw him stooping to pick up.
M. A. You lie. It's the Baron's purse Jock threw away.
NED. You lie yourself, the Baron's purse was gold.
M. A. Only a largess for a trick I played.
TOM. You'll play no more such tricks.
M. A. Let me tell all,
Help!
TOM. Help's far away.
M. A. I have castle secrets.
JOCK. He doubles in his treason like a fox.
M. A. I will confess.
TOM. Confess then, quick.
NED. To God.
Hold! Give him time to make his peace with heaven.
TOM. One minute.
NED. On your knees.
M. A. Oh, hear me.
NED. Quick!
TOM. (Laughing grimly) Aloud! or there's no virtue in it.
M. A. (Abjectly to Jock) Jock!
Hear me! We were school-fellows! Hold them back!
Mercy!
TOM. For traitors?
ALL. None.
NED. He sold you cheap,—
A handful of Romaines's silver—
M. A. Nay—(Jock spurns him and the rebels force him to his knees)
TOM. Ten seconds.
NED. Haste!
M. A. (Kneeling, torch flashed on his face by Ned)
Oh, God, I am a sinner.
TOM. Twenty!
M. A. Oh, God forgive me. It was I
Who stole the gilded chalice from Thine altar.
ALL. Ha! ha!
M. A. I dared not sell it to the Jews.
'Tis hid beneath my hearth.
NED. Go on!
ALL. Go on!
M. A. I ruined Harker's Moll!
ALL. (Fiercely) Ha!
M. A. It was I
Tattled to Marvin Keep, the castle warden,
Of young Tom Harvey's poaching.
TOM. On your head
My Tom's blood? Down to hell! (Merry Andrew makes a break to R and escapes)
NED. Gone!
TOM. (Outside) Curse you, viper!
NED. He'll never show his head again in Clifton.
JOCK. Now who'll be herald to call Forster off? (Hesitation)
And then the march to London!

TOM. (Re-entering) Tyler's slain.
The cause is lost. What's for it but to yield?
My heart was never in it.
REBS. Nor mine! Nor mine!
TOM. Away from here!
REBS. (Moving) Away!
JOCK. What, flinching, comrades?
No, on to London and avenge Wat Tyler.
Strike!
TOM. Are we dolts to walk into the trap
That's set for us? Away! I'll fight my fight,
But I'll not leap into a lion's jaws.
JOCK. Would you cry quarter to the foeman's drums,
Heard miles away? 'Twas not like this our sires,
Like rabbits, scurried to their holes at Hastings
Before the Norman, William. Men of Kent,
The rumor's false. Or if 'tis true, who'll say
A hundred leaders did not leap afoot
To take Wat Tyler's place? To London then,
To London duty calls you. (Hesitation)
By your wrongs,
By all the years of insult, shame, pollution,
That lie behind you and will lie before,
In God's name, in the name of common honor,
Each man that swore upon the holy cross
To follow Wat through weal or woe, stand forth
And plant his pike by mine. (Ned comes forward)
One? And you pass
For men? For English men? Why, now I think
There are no men in England, and the lords
Rule rightly o'er such cattle.
TOM. We'ld be daft
To stay and hear this madman.
NED. (Tauntingly) Twelve made free,
And one, perhaps, Tom Harvey.
TOM. (To Ned) Shiver your pike
Against a wall of rock, fool, if you will.
NED. Another day, mates.
TOM. And another captain!
NED. No, Jock forever!
JOCK. Bid them go.
TOM. Jock Hothead!
We go unbid!
JOCK. Enough, Ned. Say no more. (Exeunt Rebels at R)
Oh, that a hundred souls like Walter Tyler
Were found among the yeomanry of England.
No wanton gatherer of the tax again
Dare wrong a blacksmith's daughter! (To C D F)
NED. Whither now?
JOCK. The castle!
NED. Why the castle?

JOCK. (Tenderly) Winifred. (Ned puzzled)
Ere she awakens to the din of war
With Forster knocking at her chamber door
And fifty score of cut-throats at his heels.
NED. Let Forster drink the malt of his own brewing.
JOCK. How base were I, who romped with her in gowns,
Who was her fondest playmate, I, who plucked
A May-day garland year by year to crown her,
How base were I to suffer ruffians mar
My pretty cousin's bridal!
NED. Are you mad?
JOCK. I never *was* so sane.
NED. Why yesterday,
This morn, i'faith, her very name—
JOCK. You lie!
I ne'er blasphemed it with a whisper.—His,
Perhaps.—I wronged him; he is noble, Ned.
These clods aspire to freedom? Why they lack
The *souls* of freemen. Home to the cottage. There
Bid them await me till the midnight gong.
Beguile the meantime with good news; Keep's death,
The Baron's pardon and the cancelled writ.
See that I find them smiling when I come.
All's well. One kiss for Kitty, two for mother,
Then back to the free wild woods, where men are men.
NED. And woman?
JOCK. There's no woman.
NED. Is this jest?
JOCK (Fiercely) Jest!
NED. Risk your life for *her*?
JOCK. 'Twas never planned
One drop of her sweet heart's blood should be drawn.
My God, I see them now! They force the gate,
Heap brushwood, ply the torch. It flames! It flames!
(Tenderly) Risk of my life,—and you a lover, Ned.
Had I a million lives, I'ld give them all
To fend one snowflake from her bosom!—
Go! (Exit Ned with torch)

SCENE IV.

Bridal Chamber. Dark. Winifred and Baron on seat R of C. Moonlight through stained-glass oriel window at L in flat. Doors at L and at R in flat.

BAR. Your heart beats fast within your bosom, sweet.
Let me unbind the clasp that holds your curls.
You tremble.
WIN. Yes, my Lord. I know not why.
BAR. Lie warm and blushing on my breast, sweet head.
I love to watch the red spot come and go
Upon your cheek and guess the vague delights
And mingled fears that burn it. Sighing, sweet?

WIN. 'Tis something heavy weighing on my soul!
BAR. Love is a lenient father confessor.
Speak! Was there some one earlier, Winifred,
Your maiden fancy favored?
WIN. There were youths
Whose eyes would follow me along the road
When I went forth to vespers or the mass,
Now glad, now sad,—
BAR. So lovers' glances vary
From hour to hour with the shifts of hope.
WIN Yet I repulsed them all. But there was one
As far above the rest as you o'er him,
My cousin and my playmate; his bold suit
I never dared deny,—but half from doubt
And half from fear to pain him (He was proud)
I let him think I loved him,—rather say
Forebore to tell him that I loved him not.
Was it a fault, my lord?
BAR. If it is a sin
To be too kind. then 'twas a fault. Sweet girl,
Sweet bride, the very avowal is a proof
That you are true; the very scruple sprang
From love.
WIN. Ah, love is all my conscience.
BAR. He,
This youth, where dwells he now?
WIN. Some say he haunts
The forest and waylays foot-travellers,
Yet, with a kind of rude and lawless justice,
Takes from the rich to give unto the poor,
Like Robin Hood; and others that he fights
For Walter Tyler.
BAR. Shall I name him, love?
WIN. You?
BAR. Jock o' Dean, the stavesman.
WIN. (Startled) Then you knew him?
BAR. Men are not wont to be so eloquent
In pleading others' sorrows.
WIN. And you spared him?
BAR. Had I not injured him (unwittingly)
Enough, to win away the perfect flower
He loved?
WIN. Oh, mirror of pure chivalry,
My knight!
BAR. And then I felt a nobleness,
A struggling honor in that darkened soul,
As through some murky cloud we see the light
Of heaven.—Your cheek is pale.
WIN. I cannot help
To pity one who loves me so in vain.
And clouds at thought of him steal o'er my joy.
(The moonlight is dimmed)

BAR. This is an hour to lay aside reserve,
Darling, you love me for myself.
WIN. Oh, Conrad!
BAR. Then all the pity of all the woes that shriek
To heaven for solace shall not cast a shadow
Upon the bright field of our bliss to-night. (Kisses her)
WIN. Be not importunate. See, what a pall
Is darkening the moon!
BAR. Yet all is calm.
To-night, love, you are mine,—mine, Winifred,
As lovers say, but let me say, I yours.
WIN. What sound is that, Conrad?
BAR. I heard no sound. (Muffled voices heard)
WIN. Down in the court-yard. Look, pray look, my lord.
VOICES. (Faintly) The Baron! Winnie Darling! (They pass to window)
WIN. I heard my name, my lord, I'm sure of it.
BAR. 'Twas but a fancy, or the passing breeze.
WIN. Pehaps 'twas fancy. Yes, I think 'twas fancy.
BAR. Or the owls that sing a requiem of woe
Down in the vale at midnight.
WIN. Yes, twas fancy.
I'm almost sure of it.
BAR. How calm the night!
How the whole world brims over with sweet peace!
And look, the moon steals out. 'Twas but a cloud.
Come, Winifred. (Flashes of fire and gradually increased illumination through the window)
WIN. It is no moon, but flames
That leap and flare. (Uproar approaching from L. Shrieks of women. Voices as before. Clashing of arms)
BAR. What brawl is this?
(Enter L Raimond, his sword out) Raimond!
What means this uproar? Do my high-born guests
Return my wedding hospitality
With some rude jest like those wherewith low churls
Under the windows of new-married couples
Vex and disturb their bridal slumber?
RAIM. Sir.
WIN. He bleeds!
RAIM. A scratch. I slipped upon a pool.
The rebels are upon us! (Enter L Sir Frank, Hubert and Bernardo, holding rebels at bay. Winifred shrieks. They bolt the door)
BAR. Winifred!
SIR FR. Quick, to the inner chamber with my lady. (Uproar from D F)
RAIM. Too late. (Dashes to D F and bolts it)
WIN. (Clinging to Baron at C) Oh, take me to my cottage home.
I am not suited to so high a station.
BAR. My dove! My lark! Why, this is sudden, Frank!
SIR FR. Nay, we were warned in time.

BAR. And yet surprised?
SIR FR. Their leader is no churl, or one, at least,
Well-schooled in ambuscade,—my sentinels
O'erpowered, the gates unlocked, the hall-ways swarmed
With ravagers, ere I, who napped so light
I thought the o'erloud rustle of a leaf
Would rouse me, rubbed the slumber from my eyes.
Then what a riot of carnage! Striplings waked
From nuptial dreams to that long dream of death;
Hoar elders reeling on the pike's blunt thrust;
Soft maidens in their night-smocks spared for shame;
And all the while one curséd tongue that belled
"The Bridal Chamber! To the Bridal Chamber!"
BAR. My sword!
WIN. The flames! Oh, Mary, how they sing!
HUB. The hubbub gains. Look to my lady all. (Hubert and Bernardo against door at L. A crash)
BAR. Who knocks so rudely at my chamber door?
SIR FR. Hold fast, stout English oak, or we are lost.
FORST. (Outside) One Allan Forster—
SIR FR. My old subaltern.
FORST. Spokesman for Tyler and the men of Kent.
BAR. What seek you here?
FORST. You and your bride for ransom.
Then all the treasures that your coffers hold.
Yield, and I pledge you safety.
WIN. Trust them not,
Oh, Conrad, trust them not.
FORST. Speed me an answer
Before the flames engulf you.
BAR. I am not used
To be commanded in these walls.
FORST. Then guard
More closely a certain breach, the keyhole, namely.
(Laughter outside)
BAR. My castle is no straw-heap, but firm rock
Hewn from the solid ledge on which it stands,
And will stand while the name of Norman bides,
For all your rush-lights' singeing.
REBS. (Angrily) Pike them!
BAR. Go,
Set fire to bald Ben Snowdon with a candle.
It is as guilty of your woes as I,
Who never wronged a foe,— and counted aye
The men of Kent my friends. (A pause)
FORST. Your last word?
BAR. This: my lady and myself are not for ransom.
SIR FR. And he that lays a finger on her, first
Must burst a ring of steel.
FORST. (Fiercely) So be it. Ram
The door. (Hubert and Bernardo with spears, Sir Frank and Raimond with swords, face door L. Crash. Winnie shrieks. Enter Forster with rebels)

FORST. Cut down the others. Bind the couple.
BAR. Unclasp me, love.
WIN. Conrad, you are unarmed,
Defenceless.
SIR. FR. (Engaging Forster) You bore my ensign once.
FORST. In Flanders.
SIR FR. Then bear it now—a Templar's falchion thrust
Hilt-deep into a filthy heathen's heart. (Low murmurs outside:—"Wat Tyler's slain." Rebels press the defenders back)
WIN. Oh, Mary, send us, in thy grace, a savior! (Jock o' Dean rushes in at L)
JOCK. Away! The cause is lost.
FORST. (Pressing Sir Frank) The field is won.
JOCK. Wat Tyler's slain!
FORST. I budge for no man's fall
With victory at my sword's point.
REBS. Tyler slain?
JOCK. Back! Speed! The rest are scudding.
FORST. Stand your ground.
JOCK. (Attacking them) Cut-throats!
FORST. Ho, traitor! (Stabs Jock. Sir Frank disarms Forster)
SIR FR. Measure your length, dog!
FORST. Quarter?
SIR FR. What, only quarter? Ay, the half, and whole—
Of my blade's length in your vitals. (Kills Forster. Rebels flee.)
Head and trunk
Part company. We have them. Bar the door. (Jock falls at C front.)
BAR. The stavesman!
SIR FR. Which? Soho, sir Jock o' Dean,
My hero bold.
JOCK. (Feebly) No hero, but a man!
BERN. (L rear) Hubert is dead, my lord!
SIR FR. What, dead? Poor lad!
BERN. He was my brother-in-arms,—as true a soldier
As ever held a blade.
SIR FR. Poor lad! Poor lad!
This scorpion in his writhing's stung himself.
BAR. No scorpion, Frank. He turned the tide for us.
SIR FR. Ay, by his craven cry.
BAR. By knightly valor.
SIR FR. The outlaw, Forster's second? Why, the spy
Singled him out as your most deadly foe.
BAR. I only know his bosom barred the way
Three cut-throats would have hewn to Winifred.
It may be sweet repentance touched his heart;
Even so the lordliest of the saints in heaven
Are won from error's ranks.
SIR FR. (Scornfully) What diadem, then,
Must wait this robber's soul!

WIN. (With spirit) The crown of those
Who die for love of others!
RAIM. (At window) Saved! We are saved!
The fires go down, and helter-skelter crowds
Are hurrying from our portals down the steep. (Cries renewed from rear and receding now, "Wat Tyler's slain." Illumination ends. Only moonlight)
JOCK. (Raving) He does not love as I,—I, who have known you
More years than he has months.
WIN. Take me away! (Baron guides her to couch R of C)
JOCK. (Raving) Have you forgotten, Winifred, so soon?
'Twas on a summer's eve,—so long ago,—
Nay, scarce a year,—and yet it seems so long.
The old folks smiled to see us walk together.
That night my lips were trembling forth such words,
So wild, so fast,—and you, you spoke with thoughts,
For yours were writ so truthful in your eyes,
How could I help divine your meaning so?
Have you forgotten?
WIN. Oh, my heart is breaking!
BAR. Else were it wrought of stone.
JOCK. (Raving) And did you think
That only lords knew chivalry?
BAR. (Starting to C) A leech!
Bandage his wound! All pomp of mine be dust,
Before yon martyr's blood of sacrifice
Shall stain this bridal chamber! (Sir Frank tears off his scarf and gives to Baron)
JOCK. (Raving) Kitty, you
Take hands with Ned, and I, with Winnie. So.
We shall be merry all. 'Tis Hallowe'en.
The dance is ready. Come.—Oh, no, that's over.
(Turns to Winifred on couch and reaches out his hands)
Sweet Winnie Darling!
WIN. (Tearfully) Jock! (She rushes to C. Jock kisses her hand, smiles, and dies in her arms)

END.

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